

Message Text

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SUBJ: CURRENT MEDIA REACTION

IN AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED "AMERICAN-GREEK TALKS", TIMES OF MALTA
(CONSERVATIVE) OF FEBRUARY 11 COMMENTS:

"TALKS HAVE OPENED IN ATHENS BETWEEN GREEK AND AMERICAN TECHNICAL
EXPERTS ON THE FUTURE OF U.S. BASES IN GREECE FOLLOWING THE GREEK
WITHDRAWAL FROM THE MILITARY WING OF NATO. THE REVIEW OF THE
STATUS OF THE AMERICAN BASES STEMS FROM THE WITHDRAWAL OF GREEK
FORCES FROM NATO DURING THE CYPRUS CRISIS LAST AUGUST.

ALL U.S. BASES IN GREECE HAVE BEEN OPERATED IN TERMS OF BILATERAL
AGREEMENTS, BUT UNDER THE NATO UMBRELLA. THEY ARE MANNED BY
ABOUT 4000 U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL. IN ADDITION, ABOUT 6500
DEPENDENTS OF U.S. MEDITERRANEAN SIXTH FLEET SAILORS LIVE IN
GREECE WHICH HAS GRANTED THEM HOME PORT FACILITIES. AMERICAN
UNITS COMMITTED TO NATO ARE ALSO STATIONED ON THE ISLAND OF
CRETE.

IT IS THE DECLARED POLICY OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT THAT ONLY BASES
WHICH SERVE THE GREEK NATIONAL INTERESTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO OPERATE
AND THAT THE PRIVILEGES AT THE U.S. BASES WOULD BE REDUCED TO A
MINIMUM UNTIL A FINAL DECISION IS TAKEN ON THEIR FUTURE STATUS.

IT IS HOPED THAT GREECE AND THE UNITED STATE WILL SETTLE THE

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ISSUE WITH GOODWILL. A SEVERANCE OF THE LINKS THAT BIND THE TWO

COUNTRIES WILL BE DETRIMENTAL NOT ONLY TO NATO MEMBERS BUT TO THE
SECURITY OF GREECE." BIRN

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